(b) whether sub-standard and painted tin plates have fused danger to the health of the public;

(c) whether the Central Food Technological Research Institute, Mysore has also warned against the use of sub-standard tin plates; and

(d) if so, the action taken by the Government to counter the adverse effect of these plates on the health of the people?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD AND MINISTER OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (SHRI DEVENDRA PRASAD YADAV) : (a) to (d). As per available information, in addition to prime quality tin plates, tin plate waste and tin plate waste—waste are also being imported into the country. As per the Rule 49 of the Rules framed under the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, the use of second-hand tin and tins which are imperfectly tinned is prohibited for packing edible oils and fats. Whenever the regulatory authorities, the importers or the actual users seek the advice of the Central Food Technological Research Institute, Mysore on the quality of tin plate or the containers, the Institute analyses, evaluates and gives its advice as per the prevention of Food Adulteration Act administered by the Director General of Health Services, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare with special reference to the contaminants in foods.

Pending PCO/STD/ISD Applications

928. SHRI I.D. SWAMI : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the criteria laid down for the allotment of PCO/STD/ISD booths;

(b) the names of the allottees alongwith the grounds on which the said booths have been sanctioned to them during the last three years, till date, State-wise;

(c) the number of applications pending for sanction of such booths State-wise; and

(d) the time by which the pending applications are likely to be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) STD PCOs are allotted to educated unemployed persons. Educational qualification is 8th pass for rural areas and Matric/High School pass for Urban areas. Preference is given to the following categories of persons :

(i) Handicapped including blind persons.

(ii) SC/ST applicants.

(iii) Ex-Servicemen/War Windows.

(iv) Retired DOT employees or their dependents.

(v) Dependents of Freedom Fighters.

(vi) Charitable Institutions/Hospitals.

(b) STD PCOs are allotted by STD PCO Allotment Committees to eligible applicants taking all factors into account. Number of PCOs allotted during last three years, till date are given in the enclosed *Statement*.

(c) and (d) The information is being collected and will be laid on the Table of the House as soon as possible

STATEMENT

S.No.	Name of the States/ Circles/Districts	No. of STD PCOs allotted from 1.4.93 to 30.9.96.
1.	Andaman and Nicobar	9
2.	Andhar Pradesh	4933
3.	Assam	1483
4.	Bihar	3497
5.	Gujarat	6728
6.	Jammu and Kashmir	330
7.	Kerala	5756
8.	Karnataka	5326
9.	Madhya Pradesh	6706
10.	Maharashtra	9186
11.	Orissa	1999
12.	Haryana	2068
13.	Himachal Pradesh	371
14.	Punjab	7246
15.	Rajasthan	5052
16.	North Eastern	454
17.	Tamil Nadu	3924
18.	Uttar Pradesh (East)	9571
19.	Uttar Pradesh (West)	
20.	West Bengal	1499
21.	Mumbai	4414
22.	Delhi	3948
23.	Calcutta	4269
24.	Chennai	2417

[Translation]

Introduction of train services is Agra

929. SHRI BHAGWAN SHANKAR RAWAT : Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Supreme Court and other Parliamentary Committees have submitted a proposal to the Government to introduce local train services in Agra and on other routes of Taj protected area to check vehicle pollution and to protect the Taj Mahal from environmental pollution;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the Government are preparing any scheme to introduce city train services in Agra;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) if not the reasons thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ) : (a) to (e). At present there is no proposal under consideration in the Ministry of Railways for introduction of local train services at Agra. Under the revised Allocation of Business Rules, 1986, proposals for such rail based urban transport projects are now to be processed by the Ministry of Urban Affairs and Employment and the State Government concerned.

Expansion of Postal Network

930. SHRI LALIT ORAON : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state :

(a) the details of expansion of postal network particularly in the rural and tribal areas of the country during the Eighth Five Year Plan period, State-wise;

(b) whether it is a fact that the physical targets were abruptly lowered in the year 1994-95;

(c) if so, the reasons therefor and the extent to which various schemes in Gujarat had suffered due to which abrupt lowering of target by the Government; and

(d) the steps taken by the Government to achieve the target of expansion of postal network set out at the beginning of the Eighth Five Year Plan?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI BENI PRASAD VARMA) : (a) The details of expansion of postal network particularly in the rural and tribal areas of the country are given in the *Statement* enclosed

(b) and (c). The target of opening of Post Offices for the whole of the country including Gujarat was lowered to reduce the extent of budgetary support. However, Panchayat Sanchar Sewa Yojana, a new scheme to provide basic postal facilities in rural areas was introduced. 50 Panchayat Sanchar Sewa Kendras were opened in Gujarat Postal Circle in 1995-96.

(d) The original targets could not, however, be restored, subsequent to the reduction referred to above.

STATEMENT

Post Offices Sanctioned During the 8th Five Year Plan (1992-93-1996-97), till date (Postal Circle-wise)

S No.	Name of Circle	Number of Post Offices in			Total
		Urban areas	Rural areas	Tribal areas	
1.	Andhra Pradesh	24	16	9	49
2.	Assam	8	26	42	76
3.	Bihar	10	103	83	196
4.	Delhi	23		-	23
5.	Gujarat	23	29	35	87
6.	Haryana	14	36		50
7.	Himachal Pradesh	6	125	5	136
8.	Jammu and Kashmir	3	26	4	33
9.	Karnataka	22	26	17	65
10.	Kerala	24	51	7	82
11.	Maharashtra	43	90	73	206
12.	Madhya Pradesh	16	35	67	118
13.	North-East	-	11	72	83
14.	Orissa	9	26	67	102
15.	Punjab	15	23	-	38
16.	Rajasthan	21	62	44	127
17.	Tamil Nadu	17	20	2	39
18.	Uttar Pradesh	40	214	19	273
19.	West Bengal	6	84	9	99
	Total	324	1003	555	1882